

अभिलेख

ABHILEKHA

वर्ष ३२

२०६१

पूर्णाङ्क ३२



राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालय

रामशाहपथ, काठमाडौं

अभिलेख ABHILEKHA

सादर उपहार

वर्ष ३२

२०७१

पूर्णाङ्क ३२

दुई शब्द

राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालय राष्ट्रका अभिलेख सम्बन्धी महत्वपूर्ण आधिकारिक संस्था रही आएको छ । प्राचीनकालदेखि नै यस हिमवत्खण्डमा ज्ञानको सिर्जना, खोज र रचना हुँदै आएको हामी पाउँछौ । पुर्खाहरूले सिर्जिएका र सँगालेर राखेका सिर्जनाहरूको संकलन निकै लोभलाग्दो छ । घर घरमा रहेका ग्रन्थहरू तथा दरबारमा पुगेका संकलनहरू वीर पुस्तकालय हुँदै २०२४ सालमा राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालयमा आइपुगेको देखिन्छ । विभिन्न ग्रन्थहरू, ऐतिहासिक कागजपत्र तथा महत्वपूर्ण अभिलेखहरूको संग्रह निरन्तर भइरहेको छ, यसले गर्दा थप भएका करिब २ हजार हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थहरूको थप नयाँ लगत तयार गर्नु पर्ने आवश्यकता देखिएको छ । दस प्राविधिक तथा जनशक्ति नहुँदा एकातिर व्यवस्थापनमा कठिनाई परिरहेको छ भने अर्कोतिर सेवाग्राहीलाई सर्वसुलभ तरिकाले सेवा पुर्‍याउने उद्देश्यमा चुनौति देखिएको छ । रसायन प्रयोगशालामा लामो समयदेखि प्राविधिक रिक्तताले ग्रन्थहरूको संरक्षणमा बाधा परिरहेको छ भने बाइन्डिङ्ग कार्य सुचारु रूपले संचालन नहुँदा गोरखापत्र, राजपत्र, राजजिङ्ग नेपाल तथा पुस्तकहरूको संरक्षण र सम्बर्द्धनमा व्यवधान उत्पन्न भएको छ । अभिलेखालयको संकलनमा विभिन्न लिपि र भाषाका ग्रन्थहरू छन् । यसको प्रमुख कार्यहरू मध्ये लिप्यन्तर गरी सेवाग्राहीलाई सुविधा दिनु पनि एउटा महत्वपूर्ण कार्य हो । तर भएको अनुभवी विशेषज्ञहरूको अवकाश पश्चात् रिक्त हुन आएको पदको समयमा परिपूर्ति नहुँदा पनि अभिलेखालयलाई यसको उद्देश्य प्राप्तिमा दिशामा अघि बढ्न अप्ठ्यारो परिरहेको देखिन्छ ।

देशभरीको ग्रन्थहरूको संकलन १९७० देखि २००० सम्म नेपाल जर्मन हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थ संरक्षण परियोजना अन्तर्गत गरिएको थियो । यसले गर्दा अभिलेखालयमा लाखौं ग्रन्थहरू १० हजार रिलमा अटाएको थियो । तर प्राविधिको कुरीले केही रिलमा खराबी आएको हुँदा ती ग्रन्थलाई वचाउने चुनौती पनि थपिएको छ । मूल ग्रन्थ ३०३२ हजारको त आवश्यक परे फेरि माइक्रोफिल्म वा डिजिटाइजेसन गर्न सकिन्छ तर जुन संकलन गरेर ल्याइएको छ, त्यसको लगत पुनः खोज्न घेरै गाह्रो छ । तसर्थ त्यस्ता खराब भएका माइक्रोफिल्मका ग्रन्थहरू वचाउन डिजिटल स्क््यान खरिद गर्ने लक्ष्यमा सम्वन्धित सबैको सकारात्मक सोचले सफल हुन्छी भन्ने लागेको छ ।

उच्च भूकम्पीय जोखिम भएको हाम्रो देशमा आएको १९९०, २०४५ र २०६८ सालको भूईँचालो हामीले विसँका छैनौ । राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालयको भवन ८१९ रेक्टर स्केलसम्मको भूकम्प आए पनि नमल्ने गरी भूकम्पनिरोधक प्राविधिक भएकोले र खासगरी अभिलेखात्मक सामग्रीहरूको भण्डारण गर्ने प्रयोजनले नै निर्माण गरिएको सन्दर्भमा र दक्षिण पूर्वी एसियामै महत्वपूर्ण भनी ख्याति प्राप्त गरेको अभिलेख भण्डारण लाई अन्यत्र सार्नु कुनै हालतमा उपयुक्त नहुने तथ्य अवगत गराउन चाहन्छु । नारायणहिटी दरवारमा यसलाई स्थानान्तरण गर्ने निर्णय उचित थिएन । गिलगिट लिपिको छैठौं शताब्दीदेखिका सद्धर्मपुण्डरिक लगायत अन्य कैयौं अमूल्य ग्रन्थहरू यहाँ सुरक्षित छन् । ती यताउति भएमा देशलाई मात्र हैन विश्वलाई अपूर्णीय क्षति हुन्छ । त्यसैले जब सम्म यसको व्यवस्थित र सुहाउँदो भवन तयार हुँदैन तब सम्म अभिलेखालयलाई अन्यत्र सार्ने कुनै पनि दृष्टिकोणले उपयुक्त हुँदैन ।

परराष्ट्र मन्त्रालयबाट करिब १२०० पोका डकुमेन्ट्स आएको पनि ५ वर्ष हुन लागि सक्थ्यो, यस बीचमा परराष्ट्र सचिव नै ४ वटा परिवर्तन भइसके तर कसैलाई ती डकुमेन्ट्स राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालयमा हस्तान्तरण गर्ने चासो नभएको देख्दा यसमा गहिरो चासो राख्ने अनुसन्धाताहरू र मित्रहरू चकित परेका छन् । तर अभिलेखालयले आफ्नो हातमा साँचो लिने प्रयास जारी नै राखेको छ ।

अझै पनि नेपालमा व्यक्तिगत संग्रहमा थुप्रै ग्रन्थहरू रहेको छ । ती ग्रन्थहरू दर्ता गरेर व्यवस्थित तवरले नेपालमै रहनु पर्ने र त्यस्ता सम्पदा कुनै पनि हालतमा बाहिर जान नहुनेमा सबै सरोकारवाला पक्षहरू सजग हुनु पर्ने देखिन्छ ।

देशको कुनाकाप्चाबाट अभिलेखालय प्रति विश्वास देखाई आफ्नो कागजपत्र, ग्रन्थ, पुस्तकहरू दर्ता गराउनु हुने महानुभावहरू प्रति धन्यवाद प्रकट गर्दै डकुमेन्टेशन देशमा जहाँ गरे पनि गर्ने पन्नामा जोड दिई अभिलेख पत्रिकालाई आफ्नो अमूल्य रचना उपलब्ध गराई सहयोग गर्नु हुने सबै लेखकहरूलाई धन्यवाद दिन चाहन्छु ।

प्रकाश दर्नाल

प्रमुख

राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालय

प्रधान सम्पादक
प्रकाश दर्नाल

सम्पादक
राजु रिमाल
मनिता न्यौपाने
रज्जु हाडा

Six 19th-20th Century Documents on Elephants from the National Archives of Nepal

edited and translated by Manik Bajracharya, Rajan Khatiwoda, and Axel Michaels
Heidelberg University*

Introduction

Elephants have always played an important role in the history of Nepal. They are well documented from Licchavi¹ and Malla² times. However, only from the Śāha and Rānā periods onwards do we learn actual details about the function and keeping of elephants. The Panjiar documents edited by Krauskopff & Meyer in 2000³ probably represent the most coherent collection of such documents. In the following, a random collection of six documents mainly focusing on elephants as wedding gifts are published.

Most documents on elephants deal with elephants used for hunting and riding for kings and nobility. They are regarded as a prized symbol of status and, due to their association with Gaṇeśa, of power combined with auspicious qualities. This became last evident in 1975 when King Virendra and Queen Aisvarya undertook their coronation procession on the back of an elephant. The Śāhas and Rānās were famous for organizing hunts which could last several weeks

and involve hundreds of elephants (Whelpton 2005, pp. 46-47, 62; Stiller 1993, pp. 79-81; Locke 2006, p. 11). Jaṅga Bahādura Rāṇā's fondness for elephants and his courage in dealing with them is well-known.

Elephants were important for the economy and a lucrative trading commodity (Regmi 1984, pp. 198-199). They were also used in war and in controlling the borders, as is clear from a *lālamohora* issued by King Gīrvāṇayuddha dated Mārga sudi 1, VS 1867, to all officials where elephant stables had been established and in which the *dārogās*, *rāuts*, *māhuts* (see below) etc. are told: "In case you vacate a single inch of the territory under our occupation, you shall be held to have committed a serious crime" (RRC, vol. 38, p. 645; RRS 4.1 (1974), p. 46).

The figures given for elephants in the state's possession vary considerably. Orfeu Cavenagh reports a total capture of two hundred elephants in 1850 (1851, p. 72). Smythies (1942) speaks of the use of several hundred elephants in Nepal in the early-to-mid 20th century. The Prince

of Wales watched a procession of eight hundred elephants crossing the river Surda, and that evening was told that a herd of wild elephants had been discovered (Landon 1976, vol. 1, p. 154). In 2003, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Nepal reported 85 government-owned elephants and 89 private elephants (WWF Nepal 2003, p. 11). In historical documents, the numbers mentioned are much smaller. According to a document from Mārga, badi 3, 1867, published by M.C. Regmi, "until the Vikrama Year 1866 (A.D. 1809) a total of 40 elephants were maintained at *Hāṭṭisāras* in Nepal and the Tarai region" (RRC, vol. 38, pp. 626-29; RRS 20.11 (1988), p. 164). Quite a number of documents deal with the organization of these elephant stables (*hāṭṭisāra*), of which six are still in the government's possession.

All elephants received a personal name; male elephants were generally called "Prasāda", female elephants Kali. Some elephants became quite famous, e.g. Aḍaṅga Bahādura, which is also mentioned in two documents below (no. 4 and 5). In the Panjiar documents, the elephant called Jala Prasāda "was captured by means of a famous trained elephant called Śrī Prasāda. The latter elephant even warrants mention in Paṇḍita Sundarānanda's history. Said to have commanded great respect, he was praised as a creature that could trap freely roaming elephants as easily as *Rāhu* ('the eclipse') traps the moon and the sun, and as easily as a wrestler traps a weak person" (Krauskopff & Meyer 2000, p. 150; quoted from Locke 2006, p. 68).

Particularly valuable were one-tusked elephants (as reflected in document no. 5 below) because they resembled Gaṇeśa. The significance of one-tusked elephants is also attested in a Nepali veterinarian treatise: "The one-tusked elephant is called the king of all the elephants.... The heart of the king is fascinated by the sight of such an elephant. There is no other elephant equal to this one in this world. All problems will disappear in the presence of such an animal. Wherever the one-tusked elephant stays there will always be pleasure and

prosperity" (Locke 2006, p. 68). This description apparently follows the Sanskrit text *Matanigallā* on elephant lore (*gajāsāstra*) (Edgerton 1931).

In several documents, not only the height but also the material value of an elephant is mentioned: In the first document below, Vidyavāṭidevī, places an elephant on a par with a house.

Elephants have often been given as tribute to neighbouring countries. Thus, the king of Nepal had to send one elephant to the Mogul every year (Tavernier 1889, p. 263). Often elephants were given to persons of high rank – as "appropriate gifts of royal largesse for the kings and courtiers of neighbouring kingdoms, as well as compensation for the services of loyal subjects, or even exchanged for horses from India" (Locke 2006: 66). Thus, one elephant of three and half cubits was given as a farewell gift to Prabhu Dayal Chhokada in Kumaon (RRC, vol. 24, pp. 315-16); elephants (both bulls and cows) "of a total height of 28 cubits were given to Guru Brajanath Mishra to enable him to repay a loan of 3,500 rupees incurred by his father" (ibid., vol. 24, p. 13); in VS 1849, elephants of usually 4 cubits were gifted to British officials such as Colonel Kirkpatrick, Captain W.D. Knox, Lt. Samuel Scott and others (ibid., vol. 25, pp. 310-11); on Māgha sudi 9 VS 1859, an elephant was presented to Rāṇa Bahādura Śāha in Varanasi for meeting his expenses (ibid., vol. 20, p. 5), or on Śrāvana sudi 3, 1860, as a ritual gift during a solar eclipse (ibid., vol. 20, p. 115); on Chaitra sudi 15, VS 1859, an elephant was given to Sahu Harikrishnadas as a gift to Sahu Dwarikadas (ibid., vol. 20, p. 53); and others as a farewell gift to three jogis, and to Amrit Rao in exchange for gifts presented during the sacred-thread investiture and wedding ceremonies of King Gīrvāṇayuddha Vikrama Śāha. Indeed, most of the following documents deal with elephants as gifts for weddings.

Editorial conventions

Readers should take note of the following conventions:

* Associated with Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. We would like to thank Philip Pierce, Simon Cubelic, Bhim Kandel and Christof Zotter for their valuable comments and corrections.

1 See, for instance, Mānadeva's inscription at Cāngunārāyaṇa (ed. Dh. Bajracharya 2030) and id. (VS 2026).

2 See, for instance, the capture of elephants by Bhūpatindra Malla (Paudela VS 2023), the image of Pratāpa Malla and his wife riding an elephant at Rāñi Pokhari, or the adventures of Bhāskara Malla (Jhāvali VS 2019), who is said to have called himself "Gajapati Mahindra Sinha" after capturing twelve elephants (Acharya 1967, ch. 1, fn. 68; RRS 9 (1977), p. 54).

3 See, however, the review of M.R. Pant 2002, pp. 65-70; the elephant-related documents have also been reprinted in the appendix of Locke 2006.

- The texts have been transcribed as faithfully as possible; they have, for instance, not been changed into modern Nepali. Such forms have only been given in case of incomprehensibility, on the basis of the *Nepali Brhad Śabdakośa* (hereafter NBS) in the footnotes.
- Nepali case-ending suffixes (*vibhakticihna*) and Nepali compound verbs have been joined.
- v, ś, and ñ have been silently changed into b, kh, and y respectively where necessary. *haru* has been always silently transcribed as *harū*.
- The *nukta*-sign (as in वृ, ऋ) and the sign of word separator (*)⁴ have been silently ignored in the editions. For its part, the *danḍa* (|) has been used as a sentence breaker.
- The texts always use the term "*cahrā*" instead of "*caḍhā*", an absolutive form of *caḍhānu* as an absolutive form of "*cahrānu*", literally 'to offer'. This peculiarity of Nepalese-document language has not been corrected in the editions.
- Line numbers have been inserted at the beginning of each line of the main texts; note that the invocation and eschatocol, along with additions in the margins, are not placed on separate lines.
- Instances of such broken lines, whether long or short, are always indicated by three minus signs (- - -).
- The halanta signs in text have been retained faithfully.

Round brackets () in the *Devanāgarī* texts have been used for editorial explanations. Square brackets [] in the translations have been used for necessary additions.

4 This sign in many cases functions as a word separator but it is sometimes also used without any obvious purpose.
5 *yahāko*.
6 *prārabdhale*.

1. A letter written by Vidyāvatī Devī from Naraharigañja to King Rājendra (VS 1880) [DNA 2/25]

1.1 Edition

श्रीरामः

ईश्वरी

२

श्रीकाशी

१

स्वस्ति श्रीगिरिराजचक्रचूडामणिनरनारायणेत्यादिविविध-
विरूदावलीविराज-

मानमानोन्नतश्रीमन्महाराजाधिराजश्रीश्रीश्रीश्रीमहाराजराजेन्द्र-

विक्रमसाहबहादुरसमसेरजङ्गदेवेषु सदा समरविजयेषु
विद्यावतीदेव्याः (.)

शुभाशीर्वादपूर्वकपत्रम् इदम् । याहा कुशल छ । हजूरको
सर्वदा क्षेमकुशल-

ल रह्या हाम्रो प्रतिपाल होला । आगे इहाको^५ समाचार
भले छ । उपान्त मा-

गं वदि १२ रोज ४ का दिन नानि यहाँ आइपुग्यो ।
हजूरको क्षेमकुशल र ता-

हाँको विस्तार सुन्या । तँहाँ हजुरमा बिदा हुँदामा वनारसमा
बसन्त्या घर-

को ठेकाना नहुँदा घरघर डेरा सारदा हुर्मत रहँदैन् भनि
बिन्ति गरि आया-

थ्याँ । तेस्को ठेकाना गरिपटाउला भनि मजिं भयोथ्यो ।
मेरा प्रालब्धले^६ आ-

जतक् तरियानीमै बसनुपर्यो । मलाइ चाँडो -१- पठाउन्या
काम गर भनि ना-

नीहरूलाइ बारंबार लेखदथ्याँ । आजतक उनिहरूबाट
केही पुगिआएन ।

हाल नानीहरूले भाइ छुट्टिदा मलाइ घरहरूका निमित्त
शिव प्रसाद हाति

छुट्यायाछन् । सर्कारबाट बडा मेहरवानगीले बकस्याको
त्यो चिज सर्का-

र लायक् छ । सकरैमा रहनु योग्य छ भनि चित्तमा
आउँदा त्यो हाति सर्का-

रैमा चढाया । मेरो -(१)- बास हुन्या मेहरवानगी भै
आया हजूरको अक्ष-
य पुण्य र दिगन्तकीर्ति हुन्या छ । हजूरको आयु आरोग्य
ऐश्वर्य दिन-
परदिन^७ -२- का कृपाले बढोस् । यो प्रार्थना सर्वदा
रहन्छ । अरु विशेष जनर-
लका बिन्तिले जाहिर होला । विज्ञप्रभुषु किमधिकम् ।
इति सम्वत् १८८२ साल
मिति मार्ग शुदि ४ रोज ३ मुकाम नरहरिगंज शुभम्---

1.2 Translation

Arjī

Īśvarī 2

Śrīkāśī 1

Hail! This is a letter from Vidyāvatidevī accompanied by auspicious blessings to the five-times venerable great king Rājendra Vikrama Śāha Bahādūra Samaśera Jaṅgadeva, [who is] always victorious in battle, uplifted in pride [and] adorned with the following various detailed panegyrics: crest jewel of the multitude of the great mountains, lord among the subjects etc.

Here [all] is fine. If everything is fine with Your [Majesty's] health (*kṣamakuśala*), we will be protected. Further, the news from here is fine.

[Regarding] the following: The child⁸ arrived here on Wednesday, the 12nd of Mārga. I heard about Your [Majesty's] health and the details there. I came [here] having requested, while bidding farewell to you, [permission to stay in Vārāṇasi], saying "Nothing will remain of my reputation (*hurmata*) if I have to shift accommodations from house to house with no certain place of abode in Vārāṇasi" [Your Majesty] said that you would arrange a place. Because of my destiny (*prārabdhale*) I have had

7 *praticīna*.

8 From the document itself it is not clear whether the child was Vidyāvatī's or someone else's.

9 Taryāni could also be a quarter in Vārāṇasi.

10 Lit. when the brothers were separated [from each other]

11 The elephant, Śiva Praśāda

12 Though the number 1 is not supplied in the text, it can be understood from the context.

13 The term *mukāma* literally means halt on a journey, temporary residence etc.

until today to stay in the Terai⁹. I used to write time and again to the children saying, "Send me quickly to Kāśī." [But] nothing has reached [me] from them up to now.

Recently when the partition of property for each child was undertaken¹⁰, I was assigned the elephant Śiva Praśāda instead of houses. [However,] this thing¹¹ granted [to me] by Your Majesty (*sarkāra*) out of great kindness is more appropriate for Your Majesty. I offer that elephant to Your Majesty since to my mind it is more appropriate to remain with Your Majesty. If you kindly let me stay in Kāśī¹², Your [Majesty's] merit will be undying and [your] glory endless. My prayer will be always that through the compassion of the goddess Your [Majesty's] life, health [and] sovereignty may increase day by day. You will probably have learned other details through the request [made to you] by the General. What more [is there to say] to your learned lordship. Tuesday, the 4th day of the bright fortnight of Mārga in the [Vikrama] era 1882 [~ AD 1825], [from] the Naraharigañja residence¹³. [Let it be] auspicious.

2. Arjī of Mohana Simha on the receipt of an elephant (VS 1882) [DNA 5/48]

2.1 Edition

श्रीराम

नं. ४९१

अर्जी---

उप्रांत श्रीसाहेबके येकबालसे सादी हमारे दो भाइका
हुआ । सादीके ख-
चर्के वासते चरणमे वींती लीखा था । मनुने लीखा है
सादीके खर्चके
वासते चरणवीदसे हाथी १ साढे चार हाथका बकसा
गओ । सेवकके

4 उपर नजर प्रतीपालका किआ गओ हमारा उधार हुआ ।
नाम जस

5 सब चरणरवींदका है । अर्जीमे जे आदा केआ वींती
करै । हमेसे नजर प्र

6 तीपालका रखा जायेगा । येती समवत १८८२ साल मीः
सावन वदी ५

7 रोज ३ मोकाम पटना---

सेवक मोहन सीधका सेवा सलाम वंदगी---

2.2 Translation

arjī

[Regarding the] following: The wedding of our two brothers happened by the grace of [our] glorious Sāheba. A request [letter] to [be placed at] your feet was written regarding the wedding expenses. Mannu wrote that one elephant measuring four and a half cubits was granted by [you], Lotus-footed One, for the wedding expenses. You have cast your protector's eyes on your servant, [and] we are uplifted. Name, fame—everything—is yours, Lotus-footed One¹⁴. Whatever has been explained in [above mentioned] arjī, I requested here [again]. Please continue to cast your protecting eyes on us.

Tuesday, the 5th day of the dark fortnight of Śrāvaṇa in the [Vikrama] era 1882 [~ AD 1825], from the Patna residence.

[Your] servant Mohana Siṃha at your service—greetings and salutations.

3. A letter written by Kesara Siṃ Rāu (VS 1893) [DNA 1/24]

3.1 Edition

नं. २४¹⁵

1 हाति ६ चौंदिका हौदा समेत कार्चुपि झुल् घोडाको रथ
१ बऐलको रथ १ कार्चु-

2 पि काम गयाका १०१ घोडालाई चादिका हैकल् जति
रकमक परा¹⁶ उति रकम् ऐक

3 सये ऐक् जति भाडा दिया । सुनका¹⁷ फिक्दानि समेत
सुनका दिया । यो सब रक-

4 म् हाथि समेत आपना हवेलिदेखि बाहिर फिजिदिया¹⁸ ।
चारैतर्फ सिपाहि रा-

5 खिदिया । घोडाप्रभृति सब वाहि राख्या र दुनियाँलाई
देखाया । फेरि नौनि-

6 हाल सिल्लै भन्या यो सब कारखाना मैले हजुरलाई
चहायाँ भन्या¹⁹ । नौनि-

7 हाल सिल्ले आपना मानिसलाई उठाउ भन्या र स्याम् सिल्ले
भन्या दिन त मैले ह-

8 जुरलाई चहायाँ तर रणजित सिल्ले न देखि न उठाउ
भन्या²⁰ उठाउन दियेन-

9 न्²¹ । फेरि रजित सिं र लाठ साहपसग सवारि भै सदर्
स्याम् सिल्ले दि(याको)

10 माल घटिभर²² हाति थामि रजित सिल्ले लाठलाई देखाया ।
लाठले देखाया र

11 मुखमा अरुलो हालि लाठ गयो । तस अर्थ स्याम् सिंको
बहुत् बडाई भयो ।

12 सबैले आचर्य²³ मान्या । एतिको दौलथ दिया र छोरिलाई
नाल्किमा²⁴ चहा-

13 ई अनमाईदियो र नौनिहाल सिं तिनै रानिलाई लि अम्बर
सहर फिया । रजि-

त सिं प्रभृति सब सदर्दरहरू र फिरंगि लाहूर उतैवाट
14 गया । म पनि अर्जि ले-

15 खनानिमित अम्बर सहर फिराया । अब लाहूर जान्छु
फिरिगिको बि-

16 दाई हेर्न । वाँकि सब²⁵ विस्तार चरणमा आई गरुल ।
मैले चाडै आउन पर्छ कि २।४ मैहना

17 बस्तु²⁶ (?) जो आज्ञा आउछ सो गरुल । जानाजान
माफ बिंति । ईति सम्वत् १८९३ साल मि

18 ति फागुण शुदि ५ रोज ७ मोकाम अम्बर सहर आलुवालेके
कट्टे शुभम्---

केसर सिं राउको सलाम सतम् ।

3.2 Translation

num[ber] 24.

As rental fee for the cost of 6 elephants together with silver elephant seats howdahs, an embroidered (*kārcupī*, NBS *kārcopī*) cover, 1 horse chariot, 1 bull chariot, silver ornamentation for 101 horses fitted out with embroidered work was given some one hundred one [rupees]. Even a golden spittoon was given. All these kinds [of things i.e. ornaments etc.] together with the elephants were displayed outside [his] own enclosed mansion (*haveḷī*). Soldiers were stationed in all four directions. Horses etc. were all kept at the same place and displayed to ordinary people. Again, Naunihāla Siṃ was told: "All these crafts I have offered to Your [Majesty]." Naunihāla Siṃ ordered his people to carry them away, [but] Syām Siṃ did not allow them to do so, saying: "As for giving, it was I who gave [these things] to Your [Majesty], but don't carry them away until Raṇajit Siṃ has seen [them]." Again, [when the king set out on an outing] together with Raṇajit [Raṇajit] Siṃ and the *lāṭhasāhap* (NBS *lāṭhasāheba*²⁸), Raṇajit [Raṇajit] Siṃ, halting his elephant for a while, pointed out to the *lāṭha(sāheba)* the things [supposedly] given by Sardāra Syām Siṃ. The

lāṭha(sāheba) saw them, put his finger into his mouth (in astonishment) and went on. That is why Syām Siṃ was highly praised. Everyone was astonished. This much property was given [as a dowry], and [his] daughter was taken ceremonial leave of and set on a palanquin, and Naunihāla Siṃ returned to Ambara city with her as queen²⁹. All the *sardāras* including Raṇajit [Raṇajit] Siṃ and the British went to Lāhūra³⁰. I, too, have returned to Ambara city in order to write [this] *arjī*. Now I shall go to Lāhūra to observe the departure of the British. I will report to you the remaining [details] after reaching you on foot. Shall I come quickly or stay 2-4 months? I shall do as [you] order. I request [your] pardon for any conscious or unconscious [mistake].

Saturday, the 5th of the bright fortnight of Phālguna of the [Vikrama] era 1893 from the residence [in] Ambara city, Āluvaleke Kaṭare. [Let it be] auspicious. Hundredfold salutations from Kesara Siṃ Rāu.

4. An *arjī* written by Raṇadala Pāḍe on the capturing of elephants (VS 1894) [DNA 1/5]

4.1. Edition

अर्जि---

1 उप्रान्त येस् पटक चितवन्को तप्पामा पक्रियाको ठुलो
मत्ता रणप्रकाश हाति १ हजुरमा चहा-

2 ई पठायाको छ । दाषिल होल । हैदर वेग् हाति सधै
उस्तो काम् लाग्ना होइन । येस् पाला दा-

3 रोगा राउत् माहुत्हरूले धेरै मिहिनेत् गर्दा हैदर वेग्ले
पक्रयो । पाल्पा हातिसारको नांज्या-

4 दा मुल् हाति हातिखेदामा सधै काम् लाग्ना सवारि
माफिक्का हातिहरू पक्रन्या अङ्ग

5 बाहादुर हाति हो । याहाको हातिसारमा अङ्ग वाहादुर
हाति पनि पठाइबक्सनुभया यौहा-

14 lit. Name and fame etc. are at your lotus feet.

15 This is written in the left-hand margin of the first line by a second hand.

16 *rakamkā paryā*

17 *sunakā* is redundant here.

18 *phijāidiyā*.

19 *bhanyā* is redundant here.

20 *bhanī*.

21 Only a part of the last *na* is visible.

22 *ghaḍibhara*.

23 *āścarya*.

24 *pālākimā*.

25 *ba* is added above the *sa*.

26 Paleographically, this looks like *baṣṇu*.

27 This is an interrogative sentence; the question mark is added by the editors.

28 The senior general officer.

29 Probably the city of Amritsar.

30 Present-day Lahore in Pakistan.

को हातिसार बेस् गरी जम्मा (थियो र स)वारि माफिक
का हातिहरू पनि पक्रि हजूरमा दाखिल
हुँदैरहदा हुन् । जो हुकुम् । विज्ञप्रभुचरणकमलेषु
किमधिकम् । इति सम्बत् १८९४ सा-
ल मिति चैत्र शुदि १५ रोज २ मुकाम तानसेन् शुभम्---
सदासेवकरणदलपण्डिकस्य कोटि कोटि कुर्नेस
साष्टांगदंडवत् सेवा सेवा सेवा सहस्रम् शुभम् ।

4. 2. Translation

Arji

[Regarding the] following: This time a big ruttish elephant captured in an area of Citavana [and given the name] Raṇa Prakāśa has been sent to you. [Hopefully], it will have reached you. The elephant [named] Haidarabeg will not always be so useful. This time, thanks to the hard labour of the elephant stable manager (*dāroḡā*)³¹, the head of the elephant care team (*rāuḡ*)³² and the elephant riders (*māhu*), Haidaraveg caught [Raṇa Prakāśa]. The chief elephant [called] Nāmijyādā from the elephant stable (*hātisāra*) in Pālpā is always useful for elephant hunts,³³ [but] Aḍaṅga Bahādura is the elephant that catches elephants best suited for your outings. The elephant stable here would [therefore] be better (lit. more beautiful), if you could also send the elephant Aḍaṅga Bahādura. Once elephants suited for outings are caught, they would be continuously turned over to you. [We will do] as you order. What more [to say] to our learned lord whose feet are lotuses!

Tuesday, the 15th day of the bright fortnight of Caitra in the [Vikrama] era 1894 [~AD 1837] from the Tānasena residence. [Let it be] auspicious.

Tens of millions of eight-point salutations³⁴ from [your] always [faithful] servant Raṇadala Pāḍe, at [your] service. Three times reverence. [Let it be] a thousandfold auspicious.

5. An *arji* written by Raṇadala Pāḍe to King Rājendra containing descriptions of elephants (VS 1897) [DNA 1/10]

5.1 Edition

अर्जि---

- 1 उप्रान्त तुलो मता दोदन्ता हाति पक्रियो भन्या खबर आयो । खमारि लाग्या पछि हेरि
- 2 हाति नापि नाप् डोरि समेत् चढाइपठाउँला भन्या अर्जि बिंति अघि चढाइ पठा-
- 3 याको हो । पौष शुदि ५ रोज २ का दिन --- १ का पुण्यप्रतापले बहुत बढिया लक्ष-
- 4 णको दाहिनु येक्दन्ता मता हाति पक्रियो । दुइदन्ता मता पनि बहुत राम्रो स-
- 5 मलपिट भयाको सबै अंग साबुद १८ नख भयाको रहेछ । पछिल्लिरबाट हेदी सा-
- 6 नै जस्तो अगाडिबाट हेदी बहुत् उच्चा देखिन्छ । अघि सुन्दरी प्रसाद हातिलाइ दे-
- 7 खन्या मानिसहरू र सुन्दरी प्रसादै जस्तो रहेछ भन्छन् । मेरा चित्तमा पनि सुन्दरि प्रसा-
- 8 दको मूल खमारि यसै हातिले पावला भन्या चित्तमा लागिरहेछ । पछि कसो ठहर्छ ।
- 9 दाहिनु येक् दन्ता मता र³⁵ जन्मैको शुद्ध येक् दन्ता रहेछ । बायाँ तरफ् दाँत हुन्या ज-
- 10 गामा चक्र रहेछ । हाति बहुत् राम्रो छ । अन्दाजले दाँत डेढ हातको देखिन्छ । अघि
- 11 जंगल्मा छँदै दाँतको टुपो³⁶ अलिकति चोइटियाको रहेछ । १८ नख छन् । सबै अ-
- 12 ग जस्ताको तस्ता साबुद छन् । टाउको भुसुँइ पित्तवान् दाँत अडंग बाहादूरका
- 13 भन्दा तुला छन् । पुछरको चँदुवा पनि साबुद छ । इ दुबै मता हाति १ का सवा-

- 14 रि लायक्का पक्रिया भन्या ठहरि सेवक्का चित्तमा बहुत् हर्ष लागिरहेछ । अ-
- 15 ब्रप्राति³⁷ पनि हातिखेदा गर्दैछौं । जस् माफिकका हाति फेला पारि पक्रिनान्³⁸ सो अ-
- 16 र्जि बिंति चढाइपठाउँदै रहूँला । २ मता हाति पक्रियाछन् संभार पुगैन कि भन्या
- 17 सन्देह १ मा पर्न जाला मैले पाल्हि तप्पाको बंजरियामा हातिसारैमा डेरा ग-
- 18 रि चाहिन्या गैरह संभारको ताकित³⁹ गर्दैछु । हाम्रा भाग्यैले उस्रो भया मात्र नतर
- 19 कौनै कुराको विसंभार हुन पाउन्या छैन । दुबै मताको नाप डोरि मात्र चढाइ पठा-
- 20 याको छ । हाल खमारि मात्र लाग्याका छन् । अरु अंग अंग सबै नापि तपसिल
- 21 लेखि अर्का हुलकमा चढाइपठाउन्या काम गरुला । औ सुवेदार जसिबंत केव-
- 22 र ज्मादार लछिमन्⁴⁰ अधिकारिले दाँगुसिर गाउँवाट लेख्याको चिटि बिजिनिस
- 23 चढाइपठायाको छ । नजर भै विस्तार जाहेर होला । शिक्षा अर्ति मेहरवान्गि
- 24 हुँदै रह्या बढिया होला । विज्ञप्रभुचरणकमलेषु किमधिकम् । इति सम्बत्
- 25 १८९७ साल मिति पौष शुदि ६ रोज ४ मुकाम पाल्हिको बंजरिया हातिसार शुभम् ।
- सदा सेवक रणदल पण्डिकस्य कोटि कोटि कुर्नेस साष्टांगदंडवत् सेवा सेवा
- सेवा सहस्रम् शुभम्---

5.2 Translation

Arji

[Regarding the] following: News arrived that a big ruttish two-tusked elephant has been caught. A request letter was previously sent stating that the measuring rope would be sent [to you] after the elephant has been tied to the pole (*khamān*)⁴¹, checked and measured. On Monday,

the 5th day of the bright half of Pausa, by your meritorious glory, a ruttish elephant with a tusk on the right side and very good features was caught. The two-tusked ruttish [elephant] also has spots on his back, all limbs are intact and he has 18 nails. From the back he looks very small, [but] from the front very tall. People who have ever seen the elephant Sundarī Prasāda say that he looks exactly like Sundarī Prasāda. In my opinion, too, this (two-tusked) elephant will get the main pole, (now in the possession) of Sundarī Prasāda. [Let us see] what will prove to be the case later. The right-tusked [elephant] is ruttish and a pure one-tusked [elephant] by birth. The place for the tusk on the left side has a *cakra*⁴². The elephant is very beautiful. The tusk looks to be roughly one and a half cubits long. The tip of the tusk was slightly damaged when he was earlier in the jungle. He has 18 nails. All limbs are as good as ever. The head [is like] a firearm; the yellowish tusk is bigger than Aḍaṅga Bahādura's. The tip of the tail is also intact. Your servant is extremely happy to have learned that these two ruttish elephants, which are suitable for Your Majesty's outings, have been caught. Even after this we shall be continuing to organise elephant hunts. As we find and catch elephants suitable for [Your Majesty's outings], we will continue to report this to you. Your Majesty may be anxious that while the two ruttish elephants have been captured, the care [shown them] may not be enough. Living as I do at the Bāmjarīyā elephant stable in the Pālhi area, I have been providing instruction on all [necessary] care. Unless our fate dictates otherwise, no carelessness will be allowed to occur. Only the measuring ropes of the two ruttish elephants have been sent. At the moment only the elephant posts have been set up. I shall perform the task of recording the details of the measurements of all other limbs and sending [them] through the

31 Cf. Edwards 1975, p. 109; Krauskopf and Meyer 2000, p. 1853; Locke 2006, p. 149.

32 Locke 2006, pp. 148f.: "In the modern era, the *raut* is responsible for managing the team of elephant driving staff (the *mahuts*, *patchuwas* and *phanets*); it is also a Tharu surname: Krauskopf and Meyer 2000, p. 185.

33 Such hunts called for erecting a stockade, a "fenced enclosure into which wild elephants were herded before being subjected to training" (Locke 2006, p. 26).

34 A greeting gesture involving making ground contact with eight body parts while stretched out at full length face-down.

35 *ra* is superfluous here.

36 *tuppo*.

37 *aba uprānta*.

38 *pakrināsātha*.

39 *tāketā*.

40 Skt. *Lakṣmaṇa*.

41 For this pole and the *pūjā* for it, see Locke 2006, pp. 181ff.

42 An auspicious sign in the shape of a wheel.

next post. Furthermore, the business (*bijines*) letter written by Subedāra Jasivamta Kāvāra and Jmādāra Lachiman Adhikāri from Dāgsira village also has been sent. Its details will be learnt by casting eyes [on it yourself]. Things will be very good as long as your instructions, advice and kindness continue to be provided. What more [to say] to our learned lord, whose feet are lotuses! Wednesday, the 6th day of the bright fortnight of Pauṣa in the [Vikrama] era 1897 [~1840 AD] from the residence at the elephant stable of Baṃjariyā of Pāhi. [Let it be] auspicious.

As ever, eightfold salutations⁴³ from [your] servant Raṇadala Pāḍe. Three times reverence. [Let it be] a thousandfold auspicious.

6. A letter written by Gururāja Paṇḍita Nagendra Rāja to Raṇoddīpa Siṃha on an elephant fight during the wedding of (VS 1923)[DNA 2/71]

6.1. Edition

श्री

नं. १८८⁴⁴

श्रीदेवाबाज्यू ४

श्रीमाहिला साहेबज्यू २

श्रीसाहिला साहेबज्यू

श्रीकाहिला साहेबज्यू ३

श्रीजनरल् १⁴⁵

स्वस्ति

श्रीगुरुराजपण्डितधर्माधिकारश्रीनगेन्द्रराजपण्डितज्यूकस्य स्वस्ति श्रीमन्निजदोरदण्ड-

कमलकलितकरालकरवालीनाराकृतारिकदम्बश्रीमद्राजकु-
मारात्मजश्रीकर्म्याडरड-

नचौफजनरलरणडिपसिंहकुवरणावर्मसु

चतुर्वेदोक्तशुभ-आशिर्वादसतम्पूर्व-

कपत्रमिदम् । उभयो कुशल⁴⁶ च । उप्रान्त याहा दरबार
थापाथलि नारान्हिटि १ हरू सबैका

⁴³ See above, fn. 34.

⁴⁴ This is inserted in the extreme upper left-hand margin of the folio by a second hand.

⁴⁵ From *śrīsāhilā sāhebaṃjyū to śrījanaral* is written in the middle left-hand margin of the folio.

⁴⁶ *kuśalam*.

⁴⁷ *bhayanacha*.

⁴⁸ *mela*.

गातमा आराम छ । ताहा विवाहमा मत्ता हात्ति २ लडि
साहै हाहा पर्यो भन्या सम्चार सुन्या ।

तेस्तो गडबड पर्यो त पनि हजुरका पुन्यले कसैलाई पनि
केही भयेछ⁴⁷ । बेस् भयो । बनारसमा २

का आजकाल ३ हरू संगको मिल्नु हुनाले
नेपाल जाँछु भनि हुकुम हुदैँन । मसँग प-

नि उस्तो चित्त छैन भन्या बेहोरा ४ बाट याहा
हामिलाई लेखीबक्सनुभयाको रहेछ ।

ज्यादा गातको क्षेम कुशल लेखिबक्सदै रह्या बेस् होला ।
विज्ञेषु किमधिकम् । इति सम्बत्

१९२३ साल मिति फाल्गुण वदि १ रोज ३ शुभम्-- ।

6.2. Translation

Hail

Number 188

Glorious Bābājyū 4

[in the left margin] Glorious Second Prince 2

Glorious Third Prince

Glorious Fourth Prince 3

Glorious General 1.

Hail! This is a letter from the venerable high priest, *paṇḍita*, [and] religious judge Nagendrarāja Paṇḍita—preceded with a hundredfold blessings [as] pronounced in the four Vedas—to the venerable Commander-in-Chief General Raṇoddīpa Siṃha Kūvara Rāṇa Varmā (a son of the Prince), who has defeated his enemies with his formidable sword, adorned with his own lotus-arm-sticks.

We both are fine. [Regarding] the following: Here in the palaces of Thāpathali (and) Nārāyaṇahiṭi, the Generals are all well. We heard the news that there was great panic caused by a fight between two elephants at the wedding there. Despite such disturbance nothing happened to anybody, thanks to your glorious merit. It turned out well. Since nowadays in Vārāṇasī the Second Prince has come to terms with the Third and Fourth Princes, he no longer says that he will return to

Nepal. Bābājyū has written to us this detail: "I do not have any such intention either." Furthermore, it would be good if you could continue to write about [your] health and condition. What else [to say] to knowledgeable ones.

Tuesday, the 1st day of the dark fortnight of Phālguna in the [Vikrama] year 1923 [AD 1867]. [Let it be] auspicious.

References

- Acharya, Baburam, *Śrī 5 Bāḍamahārājādhirāja Prithvī Nārāyaṇa Śāha*. Kathmandu: His Majesty's Press Secretariat, Royal Palace, 4 pts., 1967-67 A.D.
- Bajracharya, Dhanavajra (ed.), "Licchavikālako Śāsanapaddhati," in: *Pūṇimā* 24 (VS. 2026), pp. 223-26.
- , *Licchavi Kālkā Abhilekha*. Kathmandu: Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, 2030 (1973).
- Cavenagh, William Orfeur, *Rough Notes On The State of Nepal*. Calcutta: The author, 1851.
- Edgerton, F., *The Elephant Lore of the Hindus: The Elephant-Sport (Matanga-Lila) of Nilakantha*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1931.
- Edwards, Daniel W., "Nepal on the Eve of Rana Ascendancy," in: *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, vol. 2.1 (1975), pp. 99-118.
- Jñavālī, Sūrya Vikrama, *Nepāla Upatyakāko Madhyakālin Itihāsa*. Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy, 2019 (1962), pp. 160-172.

Krauskopff, Gisele, and Pamela D. Meyer (eds.), *The Kings of Nepal and the Tharu of the Tarai*. Kirtipur/ Los Angeles: CNAS, Tribhuvan University/ Rusca Press, 2000.

Landon, Percival, *Nepal*, vol. 1. Kathmandu: 1976 (1st ed. 1928).

Locke, Pierce, *History, Practice, Identity: an Institutional Ethnography of Elephant Handlers in Chitwan, Nepal*. Thesis submitted at University of Kent, 2006.

Pant, Mahesh Raj, "Documents from the Regmi Research Collections", in: *Ādarśa* 2 (2002), pp. 61-152.

Pauḍel, Bholanātha, "Bhūpatindra Malla," *Pūṇimā* 9 (VS 2023), pp. 23-29.

RRC = Regmi Research Collection.

RRS = Regmi Research Series.

Regmi, Mahesh Candra, *The State and Economic Surplus, Production, Trade and Resource Mobilisation in Early 19th Century Nepal*. Kathmandu: Nath Publishing House, 1984.

Smythies, E.A., *Big Game Shooting in Nepal*. Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co. Ltd., 1942.

Stiller, Ludwig, *The Rise of the House of Gorkha*. Kathmandu: Human Resources, 1973.

Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012 (1st English ed., 1889).

Whelpton, John, *A History of Nepal*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

World Wildlife Fund – Nepal, *Hattisars: Managing Domesticated Elephants in Nepal*, 2003.